

First North American Short Sea Shipping Conference Held in Vancouver, British Columbia

**By Michael Gordon
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MARAD, in partnership with the marine transportation agencies of Canada and Mexico, sponsored the first North American Conference on Short Sea Shipping from April 18 to 20, in Vancouver, British Columbia.



Left to Right: Cesar Patricio Reyes Roel, General Coordinator on Ports and Merchant Marine, and Secretariat of Communications and Transport, Mexico; Kristine Burr, Assistant Deputy Minister, Transport Canada; and John Jamian, Deputy Maritime Administrator, MARAD

The conference was attended by 288 industry executives from all three nations, and was a result of further coordination among Canada, the United States and Mexico following the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation on Short Sea Shipping in 2003. The event represented the fulfillment of a commitment among the three nations under the Security and Prosperity Partnership Accord of 2005, promoting the further development of water-based transportation services and mitigate surface transportation congestion in North America.

Keynote speeches were presented by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta, Canadian Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities Lawrence Cannon and, representing Mexico, Cesar Patricio Reyes, General Coordinator on Ports and Merchant Marine and Secretariat of Communications and Transport. All three encouraged greater collaboration and cooperation in the research and development of short sea shipping opportunities in the North American corridor.

The conference was highlighted by the signing of a declaration providing for a general framework for the establishment of the North American Short Sea Shipping Steering Committee, through which the three countries can continue to enhance their trilateral cooperation and develop insights into the challenges associated with an integrated short sea shipping strategy.

At the conclusion of the conference, Reyes offered to chair the next short sea shipping conference in Mexico in 2008.

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